

STARBLAZER

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 162

24p



BATTLEWORLD

STARBLAZER

As the 23rd Century progressed, the Earth Federation fought three major wars, against the Bargez, Asur and Shabot. Unknown to Earth, a fourth nation, the power hungry Choth from a far off system waited patiently to step in once the factions had exhausted themselves. With Earth forces thin, there was nothing to stop the Choth except maybe the reluctant heroes of The Suicide Squad — better known as a death squad, or . . .

THE ID TEAM

FAR OUT IN SPACE, JUST BEHIND THE FRONT LINE, AN EARTH COLONY, ALPHA MERCURY, WAS THE FIRST PLANET TO FEEL THE MURDEROUS HAND OF THE CHOTH.



EARTH TERMINAL? . . . WE ARE
UNDER ATTACK. WE NEED HELP!

BACK ON EARTH, THE PLEA WAS HEARD.

WE MUST HELP, IF ONLY TO BUY TIME! IT'S NOT GOING TO BE EASY TO STOP THE CHO'TH. WE COULDN'T ASSEMBLE A TASK FORCE QUICK ENOUGH TO HOLD THEM UP!



NO . . . BUT WE COULD SEND MARTIN AND HIS SQUAD.

YOUR LITTLE PETS — THOSE SUICIDE MANIACS, MARTIN, HENRY AND GEE . . ?
MMM . . . NOT A BAD IDEA.



THE ORDER WAS ISSUED, AND THE TRIO WERE TOLD TO REPORT IMMEDIATELY.

WHERE'S GEE?
LATE AGAIN!

NOT EXACTLY! HE MANAGED TO
GET SOME LEAVE — HE'S
SPENDING IT ON ALPHA MERCURY.



THEY SUDDENLY ENCOUNTERED A MERC SCOUT PURSUED BY A CHOTH CRUISER.

CONTACT . . . CONTACT!



GIHINNA! IT'S HIT.

TEN OUT OF TEN FOR OBSERVATION ! I'LL
GET ONE OF THOSE WEAPONS WORKING.

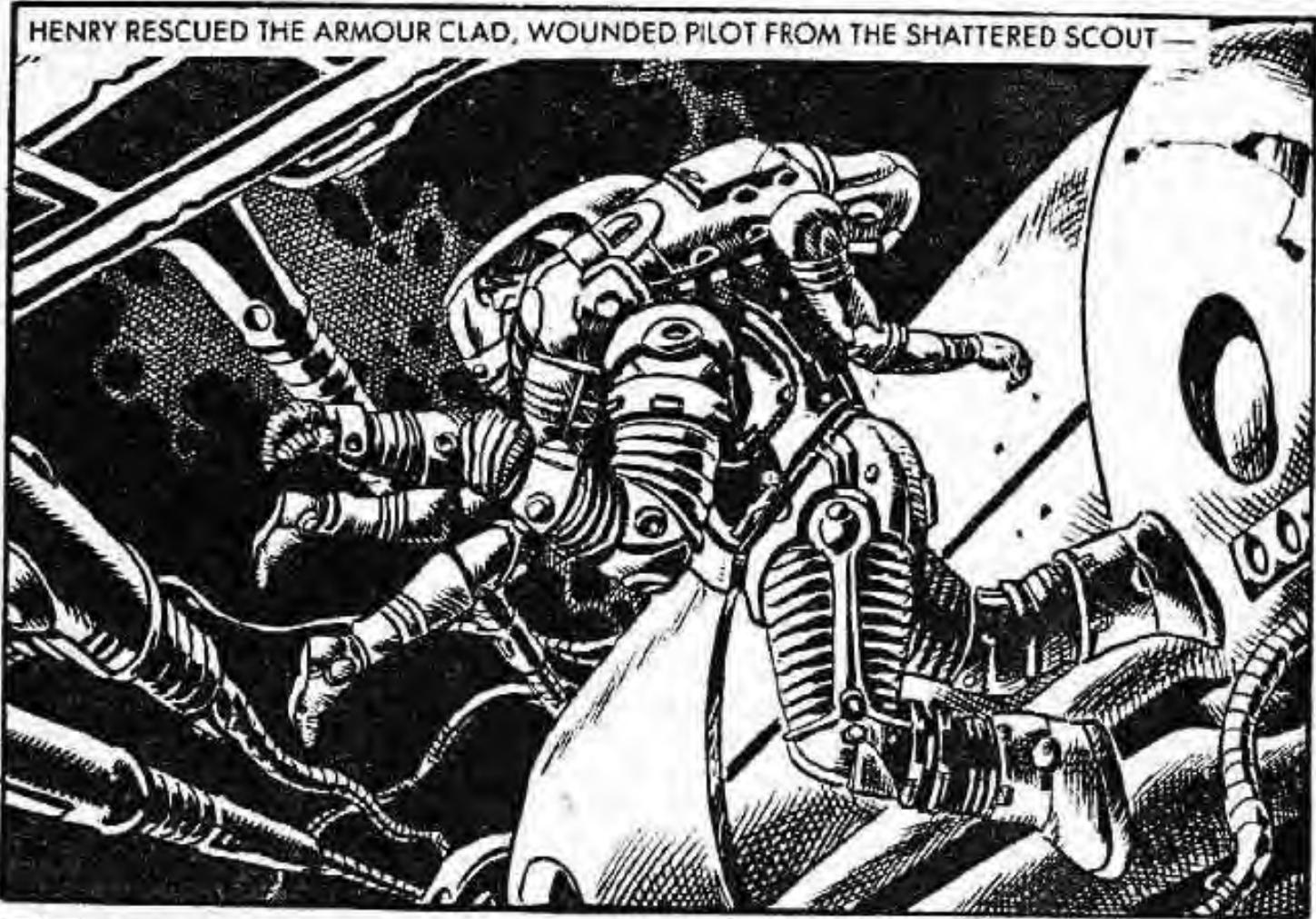
HENRY PUT THE FIRST THING HE COULD FIND ON LINE . . . AND IT CAUSED CONFUSION ON THE CHOTH SHIP.

Where in Thath did they come from? I swear there was only one.

HENRY HAD USED A REPRODUCTOR, A HOLOGRAPHIC DEVICE USED TO CONFUSE THE CHO TH BY PRODUCING MULTIPLE IMAGES OF THEIR FRIGATE.



THE CHO TH AIMED AT THE NEAREST
"STARSTREAKER" — A BAD CHOICE, AND THEIR
LAST ONE.



MY FIRST LEAVE IN YEARS
AND YOU TWO TURN UP!

CHARMING! NO DOUBT YOU GOT THE
ORDERS TO ASSIST IN THE HARASSMENT OF
THE ENEMY!

A BIT ACADEMIC NOW SEEING
AS MERC HAS NOBODY LEFT TO ASSIST.

IT'S OBVIOUS THAT OUR ORIGINAL
ORDERS WILL HAVE TO BE SCRUBBED.

THEY DISCUSSED THE POSITION THOROUGHLY —

GOOD! LET'S GO
SOMEWHERE QUIET.

I WISH WE COULD — EXCEPT WE'D BE
DESERTERS. ANYWAY, THERE'S A CHO TH
FLEET CUTTING OFF OUR EXIT ROUTE.

THE CHO TH SPACEFORCE COULD WIPE
US OUT EASILY — WHY AREN'T THEY
ATTACKING?

THEY'RE GOING TO FORCE US TOWARDS
THE CHO TH EMPIRE. THEY WANT US
ALIVE FOR SOME REASON.



FAST CHO TH SCOUTS MADE SURE THAT
THE STARSTREAKER COULDN'T BREAK
FOR FREE SPACE.



STARSTREAKER FLED THROUGH THE FIELDS OF BROKEN WORLDS
DRIFTING LAZILY ON THE EDGE OF THE ALPHA SYSTEM.

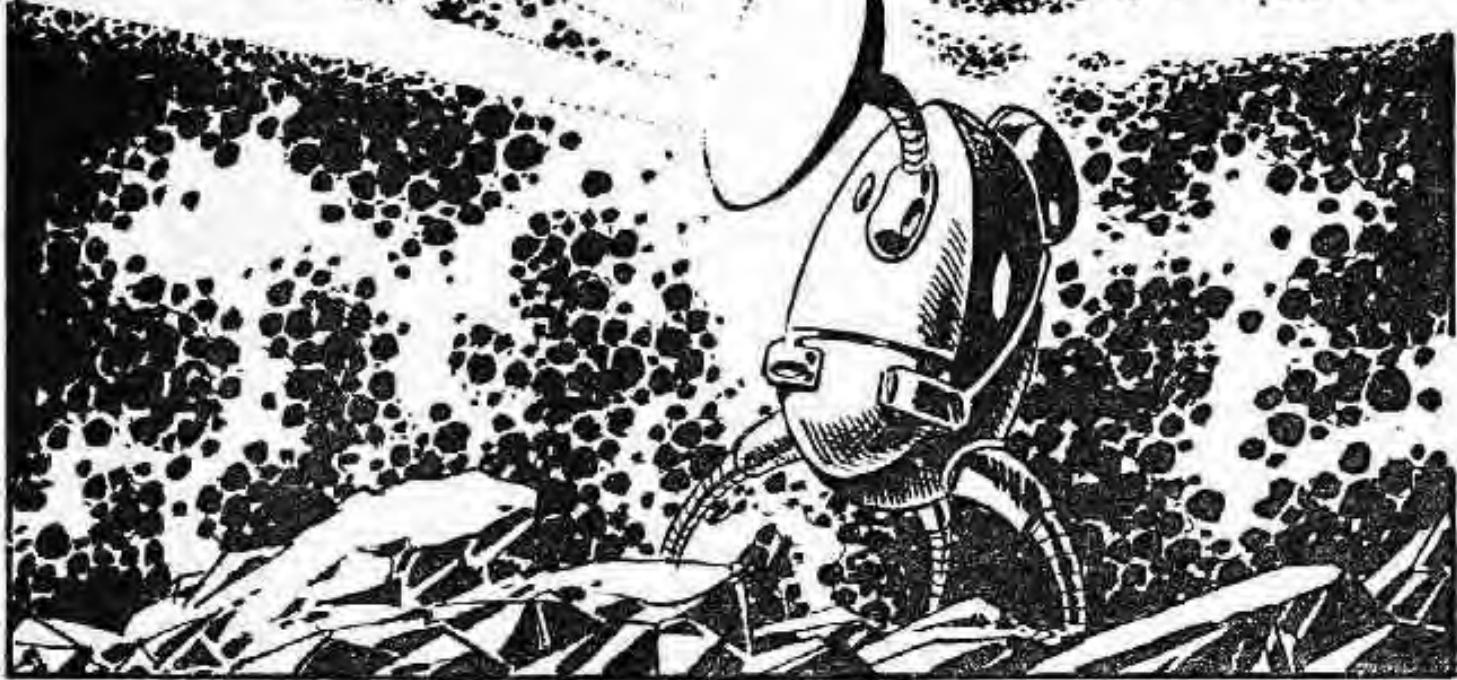
GEE — PUT HER DOWN
ON THAT ASTEROID.



STARSTREAKER THUMPED TO A HALT ON THE ASTEROID.

IT WILL HIDE US A WHILE. HELP
ME GET OUT THIS ENERGY REFLECTOR.

IF THE CHO'TH DON'T MISS US, THIS
ENERGY REFLECTOR SHOULD TAKE CARE
OF THEM.



ONE CHOTH PILOT WAS COMPLETELY BEWILDERED.

**EEAII! My energy bolt
is hurled back at me!**

THE SHIP DISINTEGRATED —

WE COULD MAKE A RUN FOR IT BACK TO EARTH, BUT I WANT TO KNOW WHY THEY DIDN'T JUST KILL US. HEAD FOR CHOTH.

YOU'RE CRAZY! WHY NOT ACCEPT THEY DON'T WANT TO KILL US AND BEAT IT.

BUT STEVE CONVINCED GEE THAT THEY HAD TO CONTINUE.



OKAY, STEVE . . . I DON'T
LIKE IT, BUT I REALISE THAT
AS LONG AS THIS WAR
CONTINUES WE'LL BE SENT
INTO SITUATIONS LIKE
THIS . . . SUICIDE. MAYBE,
JUST MAYBE, WE CAN
FINISH THIS WAR ONCE AND
FOR ALL.

USING A CAREFULLY PLOTTED ROUTE THEY ARRIVED UNSEEN JUST OUTSIDE SCAN RANGE.



OKAY — NOW WE'RE HERE,
HOW DO WE GET DOWN UNSEEN.

WE CAN'T! BUT 0.0014 TRONS OF
LIGHTSPEED WILL MAKE US TOO FAST FOR
PROPER SCANNER IDENTIFICATION!

STARSTREAKER'S ARRIVAL WAS MORE SPECTACULAR THAN PLANNED, AS THE POWERDIVE ENDED AMONGST THE CLOUDTOUCHERS OF THE CHO'TH CAPITAL.



YOU CUT THAT
PRETTY FINE!



THEY BLASTED FREE OF THE DOOMED STARSTREAKER --



AS THEY SEARCHED FOR A PLACE TO LAND, A CHOTH PATROL LATCHED ONTO THEIR TAIL



BUT STEVE COULDN'T CONTROL THE ANGLE OF DESCENT —



STEVE MANAGED TO BELLYFLOP THE LIFEBOAT, WHICH IMMEDIATELY BROKE UP —



YOU KNOW, I THINK I PREFERRED BEING
IN MILITARY PRISON TO THIS.

STEVE CHANNELLED THE MASSMOVER BEAM
THROUGH THE LIFEBOAT'S EMERGENCY SIGNAL
SYSTEM —



THE MASSMOVER'S MADE THEM
HEAVIER THAN AIR . . . COME ON,
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.



MEANWHILE, STEVE HAD FOUND SOMETHING—

MMM! WITH THIS I THINK WE HAVE A CHANCE.

STEVE HAD FOUND CRYOTABLETS

ALL WEARING THE BARRIER HELMETS? RIGHT — HERE GOES!

CRYOTABLETS WERE DESIGNED TO "FREEZE" WOUNDED WHILE OPERATIONS COULD BE CARRIED OUT. THE BODY HAD NO FEELING BUT THE MIND REMAINED ACTIVE.

HENRY FIRED THE TABLETS FROM A PHASER—

OKE — WE JUST WAIT NOW!

THE TABLETS ACTIVATED ON CONTACT WITH ANY MOISTURE, AND SOON —



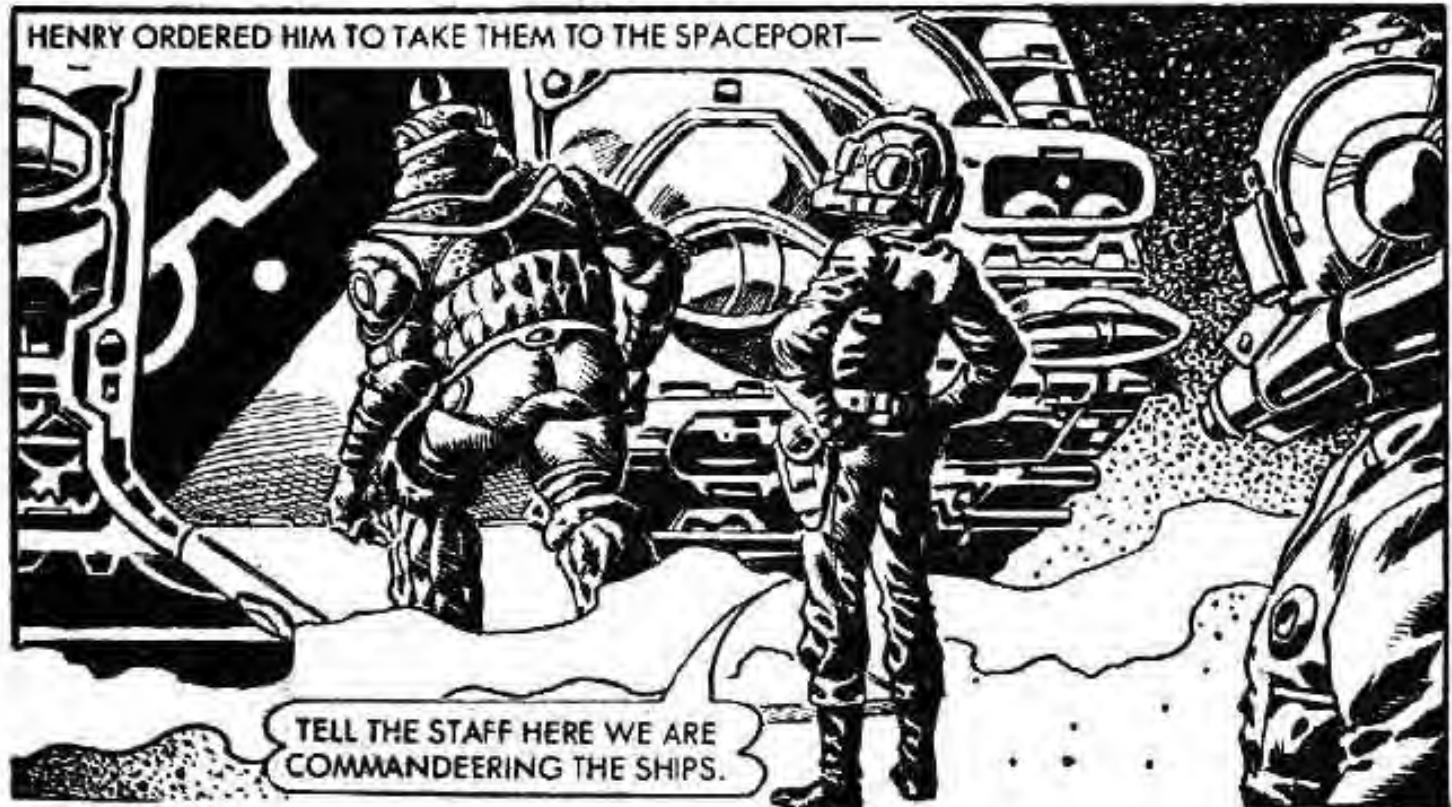
THE TRIO CROSSED THE LAKE AND STEVE SOUGHT OUT THE OFFICER-IN-CHARGE —



THEIR TRANSLATOR PACKS MADE CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY POSSIBLE—



HENRY ORDERED HIM TO TAKE THEM TO THE SPACEPORT—



AT THE SPACEPORT THEY SELECTED A FEW CRAFT.



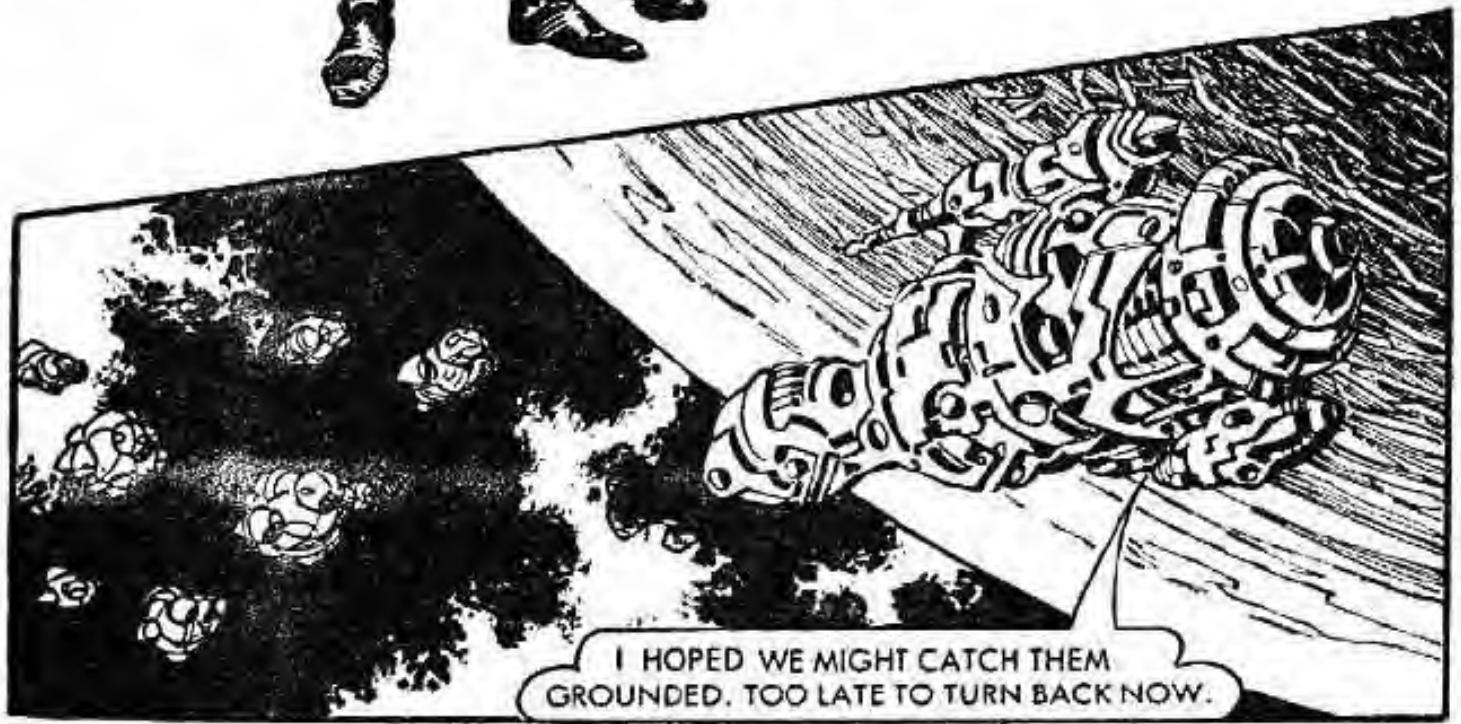
THEY'RE STILL OBEDIING ME ...
BUT FOR HOW MUCH LONGER!

THEY BLASTED OFF, AND AS THEY CIRCLED THE PLANET—

BLAST! THE CHOTH HOME FLEET IS SPACEBORNE.



I HOPED WE MIGHT CATCH THEM GROUNDED. TOO LATE TO TURN BACK NOW.





UNAWARE THAT THE CRAFT WERE IN ENEMY HANDS THE CHOTH ADMIRAL RECEIVED A SHOCK—



THE ADMIRAL'S SHIP WAS REDUCED
TO COSMIC DUST —

THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE
CAUGHT THEM OUT!



BUT WHILE THE TRIO FOUGHT —

IT'S OVER! THEY ARE BADLY
DAMAGED, AND IN DISARRAY.



THE HEAT OF BATTLE HAD REDUCED THE TRIO'S VIGILANCE, AND THE CHOTH COLONEL HAD SLOWLY RECOVERED FROM THE EFFECTS OF THE CRYOTABLET—



GEE FUSED THE DOORLOCK WITH A LOW-ENERGY BEAM, AND THE BATTLE FOR THE FLIGHTDECK BEGAN.





A HOLE WAS MADE, AND THE CHO TH BLASTED AT THE GAP—



THEN A CHO TH TROOPER MADE A BIG
MISTAKE. HE THREW A SONIC GRENADE.



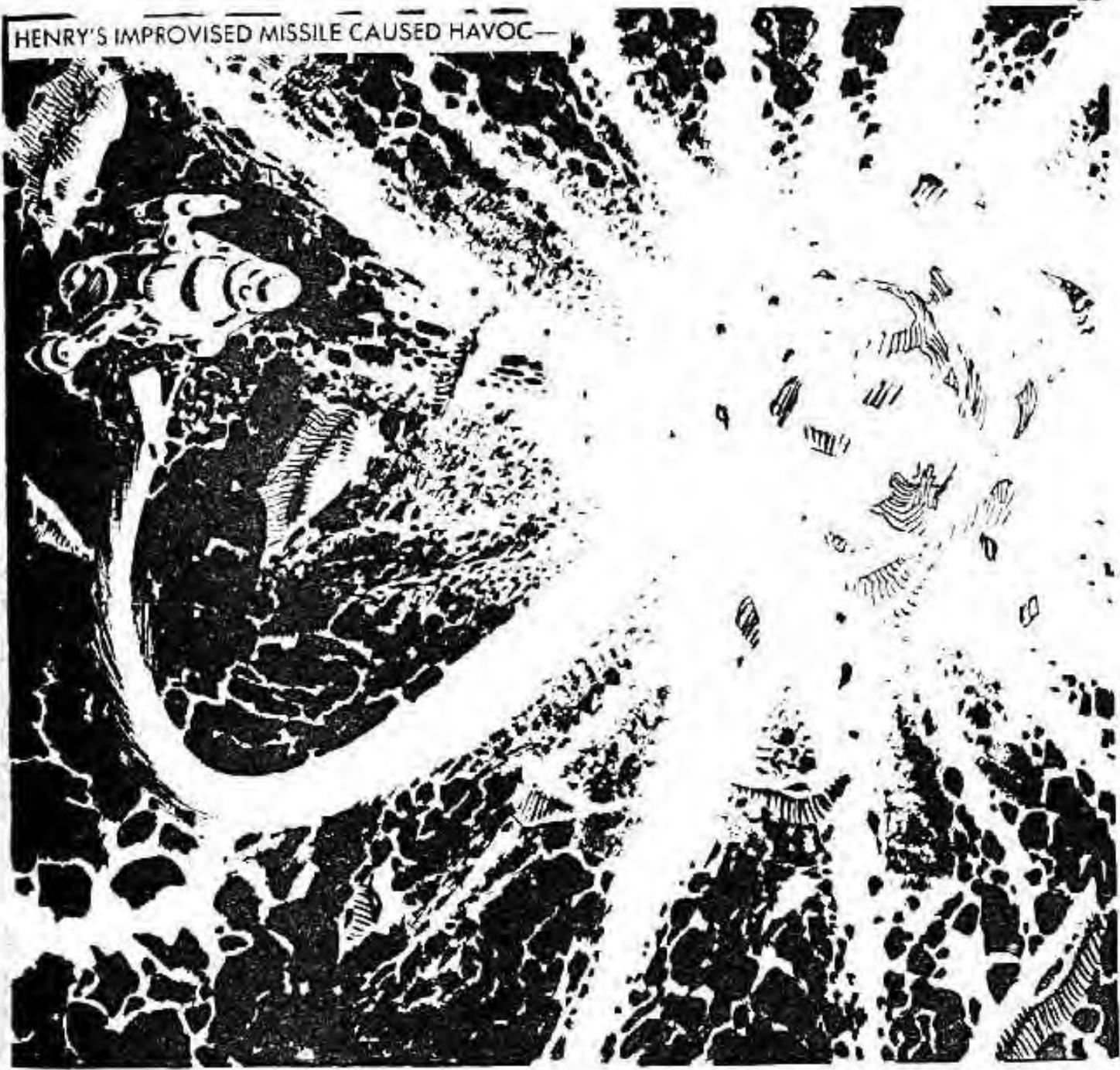
STEVE HAD SET UP A LATTICE WORK OF LASER ROPE TO PREVENT ANYTHING COMING THROUGH—

THE GRENADE BOUNCED BACK . . . AND EXPLODED.





HENRY'S IMPROVISED MISSILE CAUSED HAVOC—



STEVE LOCKED THE CRAFT IN ORBIT —

NOW WHAT'S
GOING TO HAPPEN?



DOWN BELOW, ANGRY CHOTH STIRRED—



SPOT ON! LOCK THE
TRACTOR BEAM ON THAT SHIP.

ON BOARD THE CAPTURED SHIP —

WE'RE LOSING
HEIGHT RAPIDLY.



THE TRACTOR BEAM PULLED THEM DOWN.



THEY ACCELERATED AWAY FROM THE TRACTION FIELD, WITH THE BEAM STILL PULLING THEM DOWNWARDS.



PRIMA! WE ARE CLEAR! AND
THERE GOES THE CHOTH SHIP!

THE LIFEBOAT WAS POWERED ONLY FOR A FAST DESCENT AND PLANETARY LANDING. THIS BROUGHT THEM CLOSE TO A MIGHTY POWER STATION, WHICH SUPPLIED ALL FORMS OF ENERGY TO THE ENTIRE PLANET.



THEY HAD A BUMPY BUT SAFE LANDING—

—LATER

WE CAN'T BE MORE THAN A FEW MILES FROM THAT VAST POWER COMPLEX.



IT WILL BE WELL GUARDED, AND ANY MOMENT NOW THEY WILL BE UPON US.



BEFORE THEY COULD GATHER THEIR WITS, CHO TH FIGHTERS CLOSED IN.



AH, WELL, THIS LOOKS LIKE THE END. WE'VE ONLY HAND WEAPONS LEFT.

THE THREE PREPARED TO SELL THIER LIVES DEARLY—



THAT'S THE LAST OF MY
ARMOUR BUSTERS!



ANYBODY GOT ANY
MORE LASCHARGES?

BUT THE ODDS WERE TOO GREAT —

AHARGH!

GEE!

OKE . . . HAND OVER YOUR BLASTERS! I'LL STAY
HERE WHILE YOU GET OUT — NO ARGUMENTS!

GEE, IN GREAT PAIN, TOOK ON THE ADVANCING CHOTH WHILE HIS FELLOW DEATH TEAM MEMBERS FLEW.

GET GOING YOU TWO!

THE CHO'TH PILOTS FELL TO GEE'S LAST STAND—

COME ON . . . THERE'S
WATER DOWN THERE!

MARTIN AND HENRY JUMPED —

OH . . . OOO . . . OOO . . .
I CAN'T SWIM!

DON'T WORRY — THE JUMP'LL
PROBABLY KILL YOU!

CHOTH CRAFT SWEEPED IN AS HENRY AND MARTIN DROPPED TO THE SEA.

MEANWHILE, GEE'S ACT WAS COMING TO A FIGHTING FINISH—





FAR BELOW MARTIN AND HENRY CLUNG TO DRIFTWOOD.

LOOKS LIKE WE'RE HEADING
TOWARDS A DAM OF SOME SORT.

HADES! WHAT NOW?

YOU SURVIVED THE JUMP . . .
WHY NOT THIS?

BATTERED AND BUFFETTED THE TWO WERE DRAWN DEEP INTO THE COMPLEX.



EVENTUALLY THE DRUGS DID WORK—



MEANWHILE MARTIN AND HENRY HAD BEEN RIGHT THROUGH THE WATER INTAKE SYSTEM—





MARTIN DEALT WITH THE CHO TH TECHNICIAN.



SUDDENLY, KLAXONS WENT OFF AND RADIATION RETAINING DOORS BEGAN TO SEAL OFF THE AREA—



WHAT THE . . . ? CHOTH
COMING — IN HERE.



WHAT'S GOING ON
OUT THERE?

JUPE KNOWS! WHO
. . . HELLO, THERE . . .

THEY HAD STUMBLLED ACROSS THE HALF-DEAD GEE, WHO WAS QUICKLY HELPED.

THANKS TO GEE'S ALMOST INCOHERENT MUMBLINGS THEY FOUND A SHUTTLE.

LEAVE US ALONE FOR FIVE MINUTES AND LOOK AT THE STATE YOU GET INTO. COME ON!

... EH . . . SHUTTLE
... SECTION 5 . . .
SLEEP . . . TIRED . . .
WANT . . . BEDDIE-BYES . . .

ENGAGE . . .

THE SHUTTLE BLASTED OUT AND INTO THE CHOTH DEFENCE SYSTEMS.



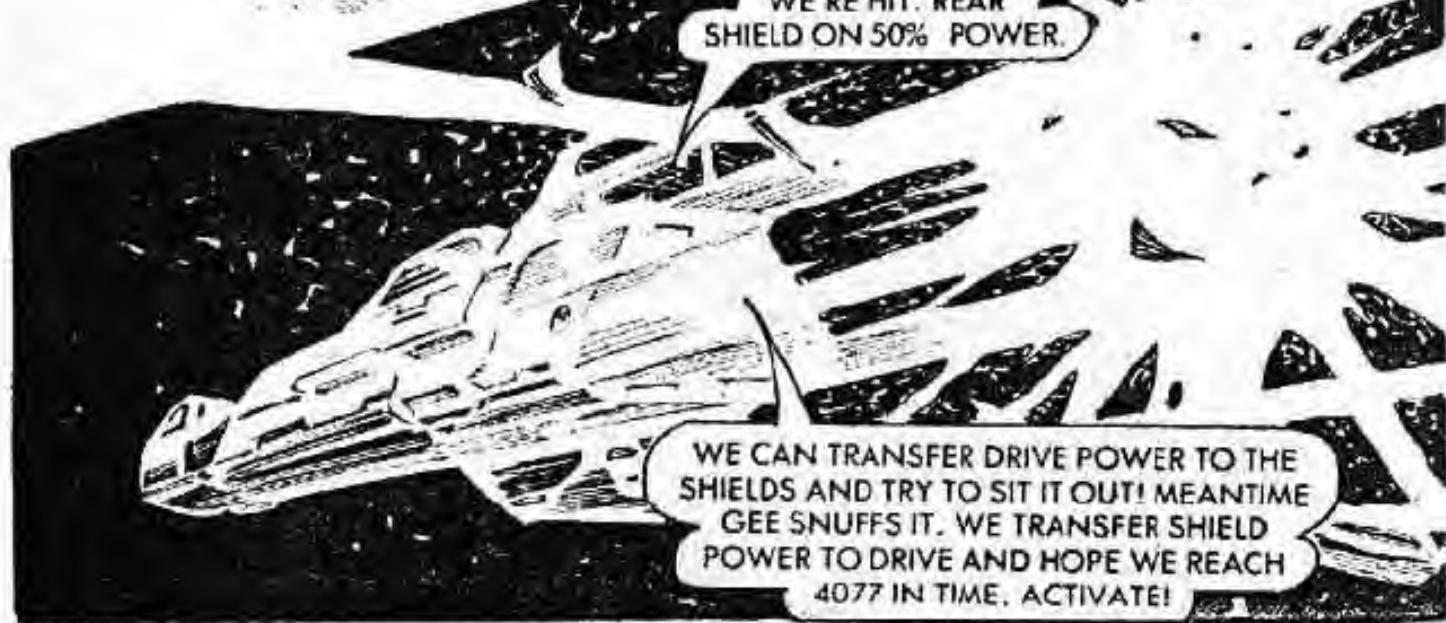
HENRY PRESSED ENOUGH CORRECT BUTTONS TO GET THE CRAFT CLEAR QUICKLY ENOUGH—



GEE HASN'T GOT LONG . . . WE'LL HAVE TO GET TO MEDCENTRE 4077.



WE'RE HIT. REAR SHIELD ON 50% POWER.



WE CAN TRANSFER DRIVE POWER TO THE SHIELDS AND TRY TO SIT IT OUT! MEANTIME GEE SNUFFS IT. WE TRANSFER SHIELD POWER TO DRIVE AND HOPE WE REACH 4077 IN TIME. ACTIVATE!

USING A COMPLICATED SYSTEM OF WARP ROUTES AND TIME CROSSROADS, HENRY REACHED THE MEDCENTRE IN TWELVE HOURS REAL TIME—



MEDICAL ATTENTION WAS RAPID AND EFFECTIVE—

LEVELS ARE NOW BELOW DANGER
MARK. . . TAKE THEM TO POST-OP . . .



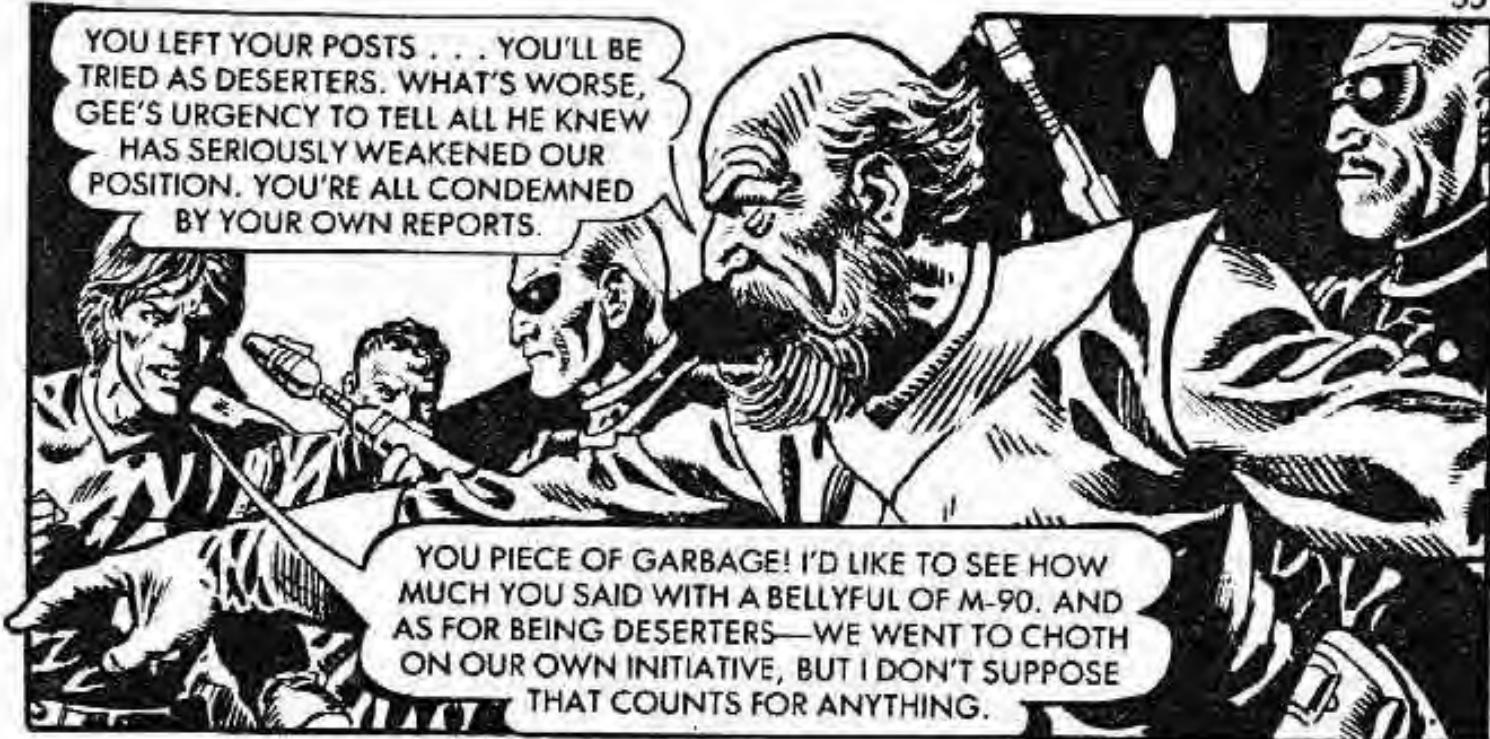
WHILE GEE WAS UNDER TREATMENT, HENRY AND MARTIN MADE DETAILED REPORTS.

MARTIN HAD NOTICED VERY CLOSE OBSERVATION, BUT AS GEE WAS ILL, AND THEY WERE CONTAMINATED, HE THOUGHT NOTHING OF IT—

FEELING BETTER, I TRUST . . .
GOOD, GOOD. ARREST THEM!

WHAT?





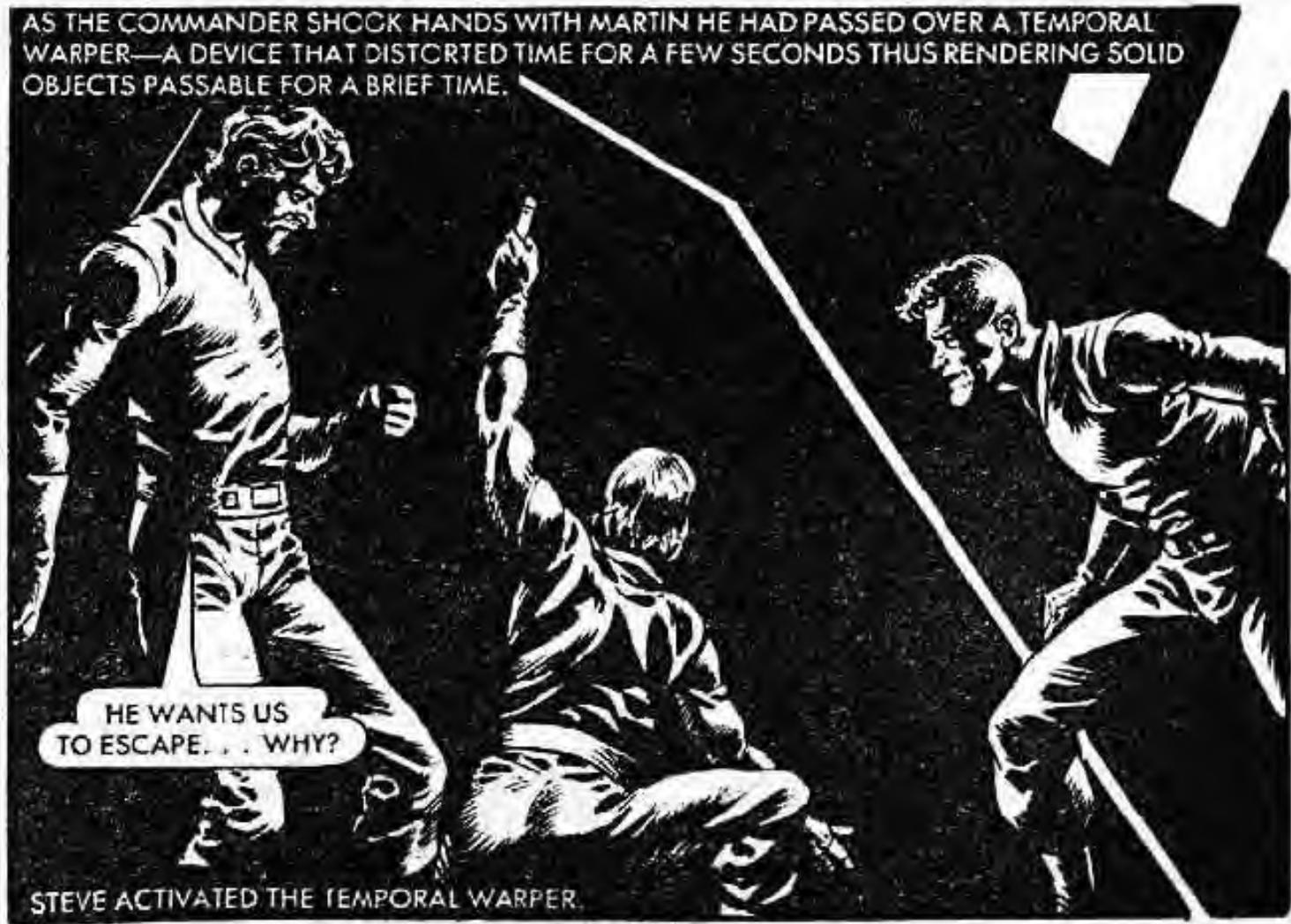
WITH INDECENT HASTE THE TRIO WERE TRIED, FOUND GUILTY AND DULY SENTENCED. LESS THAN 12 HOURS AFTER COMING OUT OF THE MEDBLOCK THEY WERE IN THE EXECUTION CELL.







AS THE COMMANDER SHOCK HANDS WITH MARTIN HE HAD PASSED OVER A TEMPORAL
WARP—A DEVICE THAT DISTORTED TIME FOR A FEW SECONDS THUS RENDERING SOLID
OBJECTS PASSABLE FOR A BRIEF TIME.





NEVER MIND,
JUST GO... GO!



SHUT HIM UP.

AS THEY RACED FOR THEIR ONLY CHANCE OF ESCAPING ALIVE, HENRY ASKED THE QUESTION ON ALL THEIR LIPS—





THERE ARE TWO REASONS. I AM CONVINCED THAT NEGOTIATIONS WILL BRING PEACE. IT LOOKED AS IF I MIGHT WIN UNTIL MY BITTEREST OPPONENT TWISTED YOUR REPORTS TO CONVINCE OTHERS THAT MY JUDGEMENT COULDN'T BE TRUSTED, AND HAVE ME REMOVED. WITH ME OUT OF THE WAY, HE IS FREE TO WAGE WAR, AND GAIN IMMENSE POWER.



YOU SAID THERE WERE TWO REASONS
—WHAT'S THE OTHER?

YOU WERE A FRIEND OF BELLO'S, AND I KNEW HOW MUCH HIS DEATH
AFFECTED YOU AFTER THE SHABOT WAR! IT AFFECTED ME TOO... HE
WAS MY SON! I COULD NOT LET MY SON'S COMRADES DIE.*

NEVER MIND THE CHIT-CHAT... HERE
COME THE CHOHT.

* SEE OUTPUT NUMBER 75, DOOMROCK.



DON'T WASTE TOO MUCH TIME FIGHTING
THESE CRAFT, MISTER HENRY—THERE IS
OTHER WORK TO BE DONE.

HENRY LOOSED OFF ONE PHOTON BURST BEFORE DIVING THROUGH
CHOTH'S ATMOSPHERE—

THAT'LL DO—GET DOWN
TO THE SURFACE.

SWITCH INTO AUTO... NO
RESPONSE FROM CREW.

THE COMPUTER PULLED THE CRAFT TO SAFETY, AND ONCE THE CREW REVIVED—

OKAY, BOSS.
WHERE NOW?

STILL INSUBORDINATE,
MARTIN—WE'RE GOING TO
DESTROY THAT NUKE BASE YOU
WERE IN.

WHAT GOOD WILL THAT DO? A LOT OF
THEIR INVASION FLEET IS ON ALPHA
MERCURY.

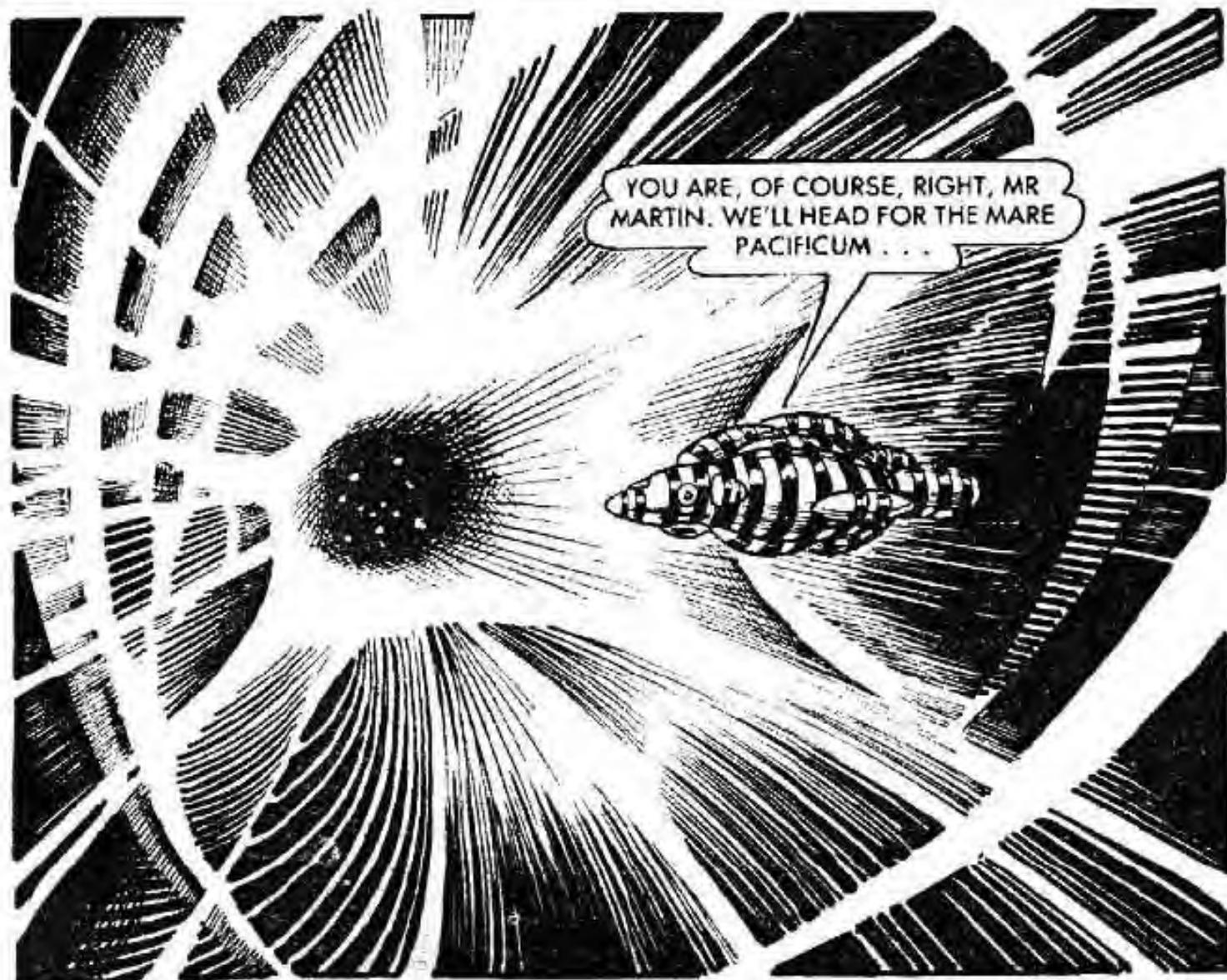
TO PREVENT ATTACK FROM THE AIR THE COMMANDER FLEW LOW OVER THE CHOTH CITY. ALL THEY HAD TO CONTEND WITH WAS THE MURDEROUS HAIL OF LASER PLASMA.

HUSTLE
ON

TRUE, BUT THEY HAVEN'T ATTACKED, BECAUSE THEY CAN'T! THEY ARE LOW ON FUEL PODS, AND THIS IS THE CHOHT'S ONLY SOURCE OF REPLACEMENT FUEL. THAT'S WHY YOU WERE CHASED BACK TO CHOHT... TO REVEAL THE LOCATION OF FUEL DUMPS—WHICH HENRY DID UNDER PRESSURE THAT WOULD HAVE KILLED ANYBODY ELSE. HOWEVER, THEY NEED THEIR OWN FUEL TO GET THE TANKERS THERE!

SO WE DESTROY THEIR FUEL AND THEY CAN'T GET TO OURS...





TWENTY UNITS LATER THEY LANDED ON ONE OF THE MANY PARADISE WORLDS IN THE MARE PACIFICUM, A VAST SPACIAL SEA, FAR BEYOND THE BATTLE-GROUNDS OF MAN.



YOU WERE RIGHT ALL ALONG, STEVEN MARTIN—WAR IS STUPID AND FUTILE. A MAN CAN ONLY IGNORE HIS CONSCIENCE FOR SO LONG. ALAS IT TOOK THE DEATH OF MY SON TO MAKE ME REALISE THAT I COULD NO LONGER IGNORE IT, AND SEND PEOPLE TO THEIR DEATHS. PERHAPS SOMEDAY WE CAN GO BACK TO A WORLD WITH NO WAR, NO GREED AND NOBODY SEEKING TO PROGRESS AT THE EXPENSE OF OTHERS. BUT FOR NOW WE'LL SIT ON THIS ISLAND PARADISE, FREE FROM KILLING AND THE PAIN OF DEATH. . . UNTIL WAR CATCHES UP WITH US.

DON'T MISS THIS MONTH'S
OTHER ACTION-PACKED
ADVENTURE



NOW
ON
SALE



Do you have a favourite story or character? Perhaps you'd like to drop a line to Starblazer's head droid telling him why you liked, or disliked a story. Fill in the coupon below, or copy it out on a piece of paper and send it to: STARBLAZER, D. C. THOMSON AND CO. LTD., 185 FLEET ST., LONDON EC4A 2HS.

NAME AGE

FAVOURITE STORY

FAVOURITE CHARACTER

COMMENTS

94

**STARBLAZER'S
GUIDE TO THE SPACEMEN**

www.starblazer.com

(for personal use only)

Hungarian Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Bertalan Farkas was launched in Soyuz 36 on May 26, 1980. His mission lasted 7 days 20 hrs. 46 mins. He was one of a series of "foreign" spacemen launched in USSR space vehicles.

